

SIEC Briefing Paper on Wireless Technology and the SIEC

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Description

The SIEC Advisory Work (SAW) Group advised that the SIEC should reconsider their definition and scope of the term “wireless.”

Recommendations to the Board

- None. This is a follow up to a discussion that took place during the September 22, 2004 SIEC Meeting.

Status

With the adoption of the Risk and Severity Matrix, the definition of the term “wireless” became a non-issue because the matrix indicates that use of unlicensed frequencies in projects is not a factor in determining the need for SIEC approval.

Issues

- The existing SIEC definition of the term “wireless” implied SIEC responsibility over unlicensed radio frequency spectrum, an already large and still growing sector of communications.

Background

When the SIEC was first convened (October 13, 2003), the members determined that the scope of the SIEC would include both licensed and unlicensed radio frequencies in the definition of the term “wireless.” Specifically the SIEC defined the term “wireless” as *“using the licensed and unlicensed radio-frequency spectrum for transmitting and receiving voice, data, and video signals via 802.11xx, cellular networks, land mobile radios, personal digital assistants, notebook computers and other evolving technology and methods.”*

Some agencies were concerned that the term “wireless” was so broad as to include so much of what state agencies do that it would take away from what many believed was a core mission of the SIEC, “licensed radio frequency interoperability.”

On September 22, 2004, the SIEC approved the use of a Risk and Severity Matrix. This matrix indicates that use of unlicensed frequencies in projects is not a factor in determining the need for SIEC approval.

During the October 27, 2004 SIEC Advisory Work Group Meeting, a motion was passed unanimously not to pursue a change in definition of the term “wireless” as the Risk and Severity Matrix mitigated all previous concerns.